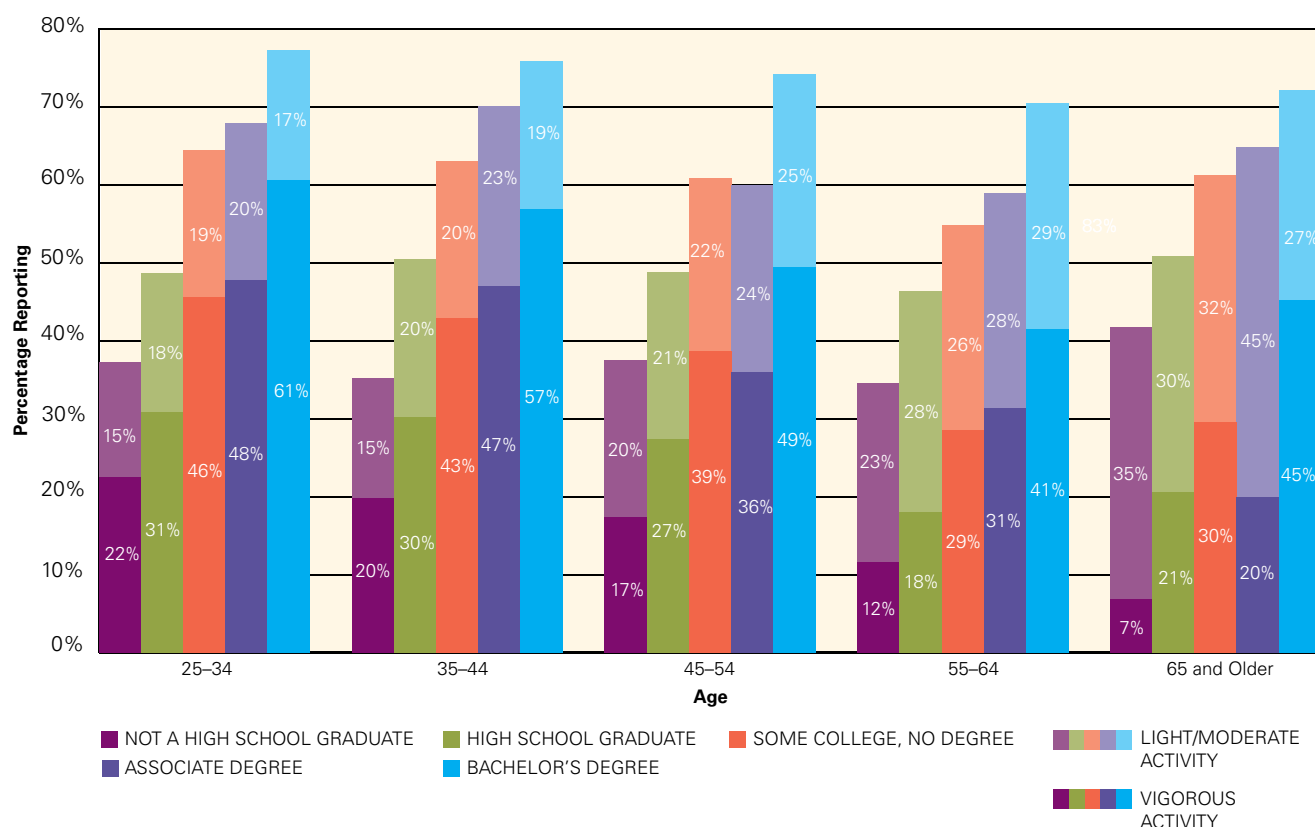


Exercise

Figure 1.15: Percentage of Individuals Ages 25 and Older Reporting Vigorous or Light/Moderate Activity, by Education Level, 2005



Sources: NCHS, 2005 National Health Interview Survey; calculations by the authors.

The bars in this graph show percentages of individuals who exercised at least once a week in 2005 at each education level. The lighter segments represent light/moderate activity and the darker segments represent vigorous activity.

At every age, individuals with higher levels of education are more likely to engage in leisure-time exercise than those with lower levels of education.

- In 2005, 61 percent of four-year college graduates ages 25–34 exercised vigorously at least once a week. Only 31 percent of high school graduates did so.
- Among individuals ages 65 and older, 45 percent of four-year college graduates and 21 percent of high school graduates exercised vigorously at least once a week.
- Differences in exercise patterns between college graduates and high school graduates were greatest for younger people. The proportion of four-year college graduates ages 25–34 who exercised at least moderately once a week was 78 percent, 29 percentage points higher than for high school graduates. The gap in exercise patterns between college and high school graduates for individuals ages 65 and older was 21 percentage points.

Also important:

- Numerous studies investigating the relationship between education and health support the idea that the skills, attitudes, and thought patterns fostered by education lead to more responsible health-related behaviors (Mirowsky and Ross, 2003).
- Despite the independent role of education in improving measures of health, both income and racial/ethnic differences are associated with significant differences in behavior among those with similar levels of education.